

Big Bend

Ranger Programs

National Park Service
U.S. Department of the Interior

Big Bend National Park
Rio Grande Wild & Scenic River



December 20 - 26, 2015

Sunday, December 20

3:00 PM Guided Walk – “Soap from Yucca & More!” If you have the knowledge, just about everything you need can be obtained from plants. Join Ranger C. Rinas on this easy walk to learn about some of the traditional uses of plants. Bring water and sun protection. Meet at the Dugout Wells picnic area, 6 miles southeast of Panther Junction. ½ mile. 45 minutes.

Monday, December 21

3:00 PM Guided Walk – “The Way We Walk” Many of us enjoy hiking on trails, but have you ever thought about how or why these trails were built? Join Ranger J. Woerner for a closer look at the work and thought behind trail building. Meet at the Chisos Basin Trailhead. Bring water, a hat, and good walking shoes. 1 mile. 45 minutes.

Tuesday, December 22

3:00 PM Guided Walk – “Desert Trivia” What defines a desert? Considered desolate, uninhabitable lands by some, deserts can be places of spectacular diversity and stark beauty. Join Ranger M. Lavender and learn about the deserts of the US, and what makes the Chihuahuan Desert of Big Bend so special. Meet at Dugout Wells, 6 miles southeast of Panther Junction. Bring water, a hat, and good walking shoes. ½ mile. 1 hour.

Wednesday, December 23

9:30 AM Program – “Scorpions” How is a scorpion like an alligator? What do they have in common with seals? Join Ranger K. Eckert to learn more about scorpions, common misconceptions, and the unusual similarities they have to other species. Meet on the patio outside the Chisos Mountains Lodge. Wheelchair accessible. 45 minutes.

Thursday, December 24

3:00 PM Guided Walk – “Islands in the Sky” It is hard to stand in the Chisos Basin and not have a heightened sense of one’s surroundings. The forested environment supports a variety of plants and animals not found elsewhere in the park. Join Ranger B. Frohbieter for a discussion of the “sky island” ecology of the Chisos Mountains. Meet at the Chisos Basin Trailhead. Wheelchair accessible. 1/3 mile. 45 minutes.

Saturday, December 26

7:30 PM Evening Program – “Band on the Run” Nomadic Plains Indians that were feared by even the fiercest of tribes, the Comanche Indians were savvy traders, but also marauders and thieves. Their ancient raiding route came through the Big Bend and is known today as the Comanche Trail. Join Ranger K. Eckert to learn more about who they were, why they came here, and what happened to people who were along their path. Meet at the Chisos Basin Amphitheater. Wheelchair accessible. Bring a flashlight. 1 hour.

Not able to attend a program? Consider these alternatives:

The 22-mile-long Ross Maxwell Scenic Drive offers access to eight different trails, several scenic vistas, many paved pullouts with exhibits that highlight park geology and cultural history, and culminates at the Castolon Historic District. Take a day and go explore!

Enjoy the breath-taking beauty of Big Bend National Park in comfort with our 22-minute Park Orientation film. Available daily on request at the Panther Junction Visitor Center.

Explore beyond the park and learn more about Big Bend history. The Terlingua Ghost Town offers several restaurants and stores, as well as a self-guiding tour of the old quicksilver mining district and historic cemetery.